

IMPLEMENTATION TEAM MEETING NOTES

June 7, 2000, 9:00 a.m.-2 p.m.

NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE OFFICES PORTLAND, OREGON

I. Greetings, Introductions and Review of the Agenda.

The June 7, 2000 meeting of the Implementation Team, held at the National Marine Fisheries Service's offices in Portland, Oregon, was chaired by Brian Brown of NMFS and facilitated by Donna Silverberg. The agenda for the June 7 meeting and a list of attendees are attached as Enclosures A and B.

The following is a distillation (not a verbatim transcript) of items discussed at the meeting, together with actions taken on those items. Please note that some enclosures referenced in the body of the text may be too lengthy to attach; all enclosures referenced are available upon request from NMFS's Kathy Ceballos at 503/230-5420 or via email at kathy.ceballos@noaa.gov.

Silverberg welcomed everyone to the meeting, led a round of introductions and a review of the agenda.

II. Updates.

A. In-Season Management. See Agenda Items III and IV.

B. Independent Scientific Advisory Board (ISAB). No ISAB update was presented at today's meeting.

C. Water Quality Team (WQT). Mark Schneider reported that, next month, he has arranged for Mike Schneider of the Corps' Waterways Experiment Station to brief the IT on his dissolved gas

model – the so-called “spreadsheet model” he has developed in conjunction with BPA. Because it’s a spreadsheet-based model, he said, it’s very easy to operate, given some basic data on power generation, spill and total flow. It’s a true system model, Schneider said; you can change spill or another parameter at a given project, and see what that does to gas levels at all projects downstream. At any rate, said Schneider, this is a heads-up that Mike will be attending the July IT meeting, and will be available to demonstrate the model and answer any questions you may have.

Potentially, this spreadsheet model could be used as an in-season management tool? Jim Ruff asked. I believe it has that potential, Schneider replied; the model has been validated, but has not yet been applied in-season. That is one of the reasons we thought it would be useful for this group to talk to Mike, he added.

Schneider noted that one other parameter the model takes into account, meteorological conditions, can have a major effect on gas production and movement. In response to a question, he said the model operates from Grand Coulee and Dworshak down to the estuary. Brown suggested that Cindy Henriksen invite the TMT to sit in on Schneider’s presentation to the IT or, if there is sufficient interest, to schedule a separate briefing for the TMT while Schneider is in town.

Mary Lou Soscia added that, in a related vein, EPA is continuing to develop the process for creating a water quality plan for the Columbia/Snake mainstems; there was a meeting between the states, tribes and EPA in Spokane on April 21, and another meeting is going to be scheduled toward the end of June. At some point, Soscia said, a presentation to the IT on that process may be appropriate, given the connection of that process to the water quality sections of the FCRPS Biological Opinion, to the effort to develop a mainstem temperature/dissolved gas TMDL, and to the Lower Snake lawsuit. It was agreed that such a presentation would probably be appropriate for either the July or August IT meetings.

D. System Configuration Team. No SCT update was presented at today’s meeting.

E. Quantitative Analytical Report (QAR). No QAR update was presented at today’s meeting.

III. Final Water Management Plan and TMT Guidelines.

Cindy Henriksen reported that the June early-bird water supply forecast is now available; the June final forecast is not. The June early-bird forecast is down slightly from the May final; for example, at The Dalles, the June early-bird forecast is 97% of average, down from 99% of average in the May final. At Grand Coulee, the new forecast is for 103% of average runoff, down from 104% in the May final. The new forecast for Lower Granite is 86% of average, down from 88% in the May final.

Henriksen distributed copies of the current TMT spreadsheet (Enclosure C), which reflects the

fact that, due to a cool, dry May, many projects have been used to augment flows earlier in the season than normal. The weather continues to be cool and dry; Henriksen said; flows are receding, and the snowmelt season is delayed.

The current operational focus is on reservoir refill, Henriksen continued; it is hoped that Dworshak, currently 14 feet from full and releasing minimum outflow, will refill by June 30. Brownlee Reservoir is near full and refilling; flow at Lower Granite has been in the upper 80 Kcfs range. Grand Coulee elevation is currently near 1258 feet; the project is refilling slightly, with average flow at Priest Rapids in the 123 Kcfs range. Average flow at McNary was only about 220 Kcfs last week, Henriksen said, primarily due to current weather and runoff conditions. In general, she said, the prospects for June 30 refill look pretty good at Hungry Horse and Dworshak; Grand Coulee may refill in early July, rather than late June.

Ron Boyce said that, based on the numbers shown in the current spreadsheet, summer flows would appear to be disastrous for fish. Has the TMT begun to discuss potential operational strategies to address this problem and meet the flow targets? Boyce asked. We have talked about that, Henriksen replied; with the current objective of using more flow now, even if that means not refilling some projects on June 30, there is a recognition that what we're doing is, in effect, shifting flow from summer to spring. Isn't that emphasis on spring flow contrary to the objectives laid out in the BiOp? Dan Daley asked. NMFS has agreed to these operations, Henriksen replied. And why is that? Daley asked. As Cindy said, the projects are expected to refill, Jim Ruff observed. However, Grand Coulee is not expected to refill until some time in July, Henriksen said – the less full Grand Coulee is on June 30, the less water will be available for flow augmentation in July and August. Paul Wagner added that the only real effect of this operation is to shift about 10 Kcfs in flow during the first week in July into the second week in June; low flows later in the summer are the result of lower-than-hoped-for precipitation, not a week's delay in Grand Coulee refill.

Brown observed that, based on his reading of the spreadsheet, despite the fact that the summer flow objectives are unlikely to be met this year, all of the water that has been identified in the Biological Opinion for use in salmon flow augmentation will be available in 2000. Are you suggesting that the project operators need to find sources of water beyond those specified in the Biological Opinion to improve flows this July and August? Brown asked. I think the BiOp clearly gives the TMT the flexibility to consider altered operations and alternative water sources to improve passage conditions, Boyce replied; to me, conditions this summer warrant those steps. Shifting water isn't going to help the situation, he said; I think the TMT needs to look at altering planned operations and finding additional water. Jim Nielsen observed that the spreadsheet shows that there will be 12 feet of storage left in Hungry Horse reservoir above the August 31 draft limit specified in the BiOp. Henriksen said the latter point will certainly be discussed at TMT; this is the first attempt to model summer operations, she said, and the modeler chose to model the IRC operation at Hungry Horse.

So that is one potential source of water to help solve this problem, said Brown; have you

brought other specific proposals to TMT, in terms of where you think those additional sources of water might be? No, Boyce replied; I've heard there may be some water available from Albeni Falls, but I guess I would turn that question back to the project operators – we are in an urgent situation here, because it is clearly understood that flows of less than 200 Kcfs cause high mortality in juvenile fish. According to the current spreadsheet, we will be below 200 Kcfs at McNary every week in July and August, and I'm hoping the project operators will be willing to look for additional sources of water and bring some options to the TMT.

Your original question was whether TMT is looking at potential strategies to improve flows this summer, said Silverberg; it sounds as though the answer to that question is yes. Given that fact, she said, my thought is that you might work with Christine Mallette, Oregon's TMT representative, to develop some potential strategies of your own, with the expectation that the project operators will, hopefully, do the same. Basically, said Boyce, I would like to see some recognition at a higher level – among the project operators and NMFS – that this is not a good situation, and that we should work together to try to resolve it.

Is there a reason the Corps modeler chose to model the IRC operation? Daley asked. Reclamation has indicated that they would like to look at this alternative, Henriksen replied; as I said, this is the first time we have included August operations in the spreadsheet model run. We had to start with something, she said, and the modeler chose to begin with that assumption. However, the spreadsheet doesn't reflect a firm decision made at TMT, said Brown. No, it does not, Henriksen agreed.

After a few minutes of additional discussion, Boyce requested that a serious discussion of available alternatives for improving flows in July and August be placed on the next IT agenda. Ultimately, it was agreed that this would be appropriate, although Brown noted that Oregon and other interested parties – state, federal and tribal – will need to bring some specific proposals to the meeting, rather than expecting the IT to develop those options.

Brown suggested that both TMT and individual stakeholders continue to discuss this issue between now and July 12; further, he said, I would suggest several assignments for people, if you expect the IT to consider the question of additional sources of water to improve the flow situation this summer: first, that Montana address the question of Libby and Hungry Horse operations; second, that Idaho address Dworshak, Albeni Falls and Brownlee operations, as well as the potential for leasing additional water from the Upper Snake; third, that Washington report on the availability of additional water from Grand Coulee and Banks Lake, and fourth, that BPA provide a report on potential sources of additional water from the Canadian projects. There was general agreement that this would be a useful course of action.

Silverberg summarized the outcome of this agenda items by saying that all interested parties will work individually and together to develop solutions for this low-flow year, to be discussed at the July IT

meeting; the TMT will have substantive discussions on this issue, in an effort to reach consensus, if possible; and the other parties will work on their assignments, as outlined by Brown, above.

Athearn noted that, although Oregon raised this issue, they are not included in the above list of tasks. That's a fair question, said Brown – perhaps we can also ask Oregon to investigate potential sources of water, such as the Owyhee, within their borders. I will do so, said Boyce.

Litchfield observed that some would argue that a descending hydrograph, with higher flows in July tailing off into lower flows in late August, is actually beneficial for fish, in that it mimics the natural hydrograph; he asked that NMFS develop an assessment of the best biology surrounding that question. Fair enough, said Brown – we'll do that, for both McNary and Lower Granite. Silverberg said she will relay the Idaho assignment to Jim Yost.

Returning to the topic of the 2000 Water Management Plan and TMT Guidelines, Henriksen distributed copies of the final Water Management Plan (Enclosure D). She said the plan includes a reference to the Montana IRCs, and added that the plan has been reviewed and endorsed by the Water Quality Team. There are seven appendices to the 2000 plan, including spill and dissolved gas management plans, emergency protocols and load shaping guidelines; all of these documents are available via the TMT web page. The most interesting appendix is Number 6, she said, covering TMT goals, objectives and triggers; the IT may want to pay particular attention to that one.

Is this primarily F.Y.I., asked Boyce, or are you asking for our comments on these documents? It's pretty much F.Y.I., Henriksen replied; they have been approved by the TMT, and all of the TMT representatives have already provided their input after, presumably, coordinating those comments with their IT representatives. Have all of the salmon managers agreed to Appendix 6? Boyce asked. I believe that, at this point, the TMT considers Appendix 6 to be a draft, Silverberg replied; there was some interest in having an opportunity to review the goals, objectives and triggers laid out in the new BiOp before Appendix 6 was finalized. That's correct, Henriksen said – it's a conceptual appendix, and a work in progress.

The group spent a few minutes discussing the Water Management Plan, pointing out a few minor editorial changes. Should we set a period for any additional comments? Silverberg asked. I would prefer not, said Brown – my understanding is that these documents have been approved by the TMT; the Water Management Plan can be modified if issues arise which need to be addressed. Personally, he said, I would prefer not to spend the summer trying to finalize the Water Management Plan yet again. My preference would be simply to consider the 2000 Water Management Plan approved, Brown said, with the understanding that some modifications may be necessary once the Biological Opinion is finalized. No objections were raised to this suggestion.

IV. Libby Sturgeon Operation Update.

Henriksen said that, last Thursday, Bob Hallock came to the TMT with the Fish and Wildlife Service's 2000 sturgeon operation request. The TMT discussed that requested operation, then decided to form a technical subgroup to discuss some of the nuts and bolts of the proposal, in an effort to reach agreement on a summer operation that will benefit sturgeon, bull trout and salmon. The subgroup met on June 5, to discuss seven potential operational scenarios modeled by the Corps. During Monday's meeting, it was agreed that the sturgeon operation would begin on the date requested by the Fish and Wildlife Service, said Henriksen; the Corps started ramping up Libby outflow yesterday, with the goal of reaching full powerhouse capacity – 25 Kcfs – by Monday morning, June 12. The goal of this year's operation is to investigate the effects of flow on larval sturgeon, which will be released from the hatchery on Monday evening.

There are still some issues that need to be resolved, Henriksen continued; the June final water supply forecast will be coming out later this week, and if it goes down, that may effect the duration of this year's sturgeon operation. We would also like to get a Libby/Arrow storage exchange this year, she said; the TMT subgroup recognized that the higher we can keep Libby's July 31 elevation, the more likely the swap becomes.

With these uncertainties in mind, said Henriksen, the currently-planned Libby operation this summer includes 19 days of sturgeon flow at full powerhouse capacity from Libby, followed by ramp-down, at an agreed-upon rate, to an interim Kootenai River bull trout flow of 8 Kcfs. After that, Henriksen said, there are two possible scenarios – maintain 8 Kcfs outflow from Libby through August 31, leaving Libby at elevation 2454 feet on August 31, with the assumption that there will be a Libby/Arrow swap in place this year, and a second operation, in which Libby outflow would be increased to 20 Kcfs throughout the month of August, leaving the project at elevation 2439 feet on August 31.

The TMT subgroup will be continuing to meet to discuss this operation, Henriksen said; they will be discussing possible flexibility in the duration of the sturgeon release or in the planned 8 Kcfs outflow during July. Again, she said, we need to see the June final water supply forecast before we can decide how best to allocate the resources available this year.

In response to a question from Ruff, Henriksen said the main factor driving the feasibility of the Libby/Arrow swap is Lake Kookanoosa elevation. Unless the project is within about five feet of full on July 31, she said, the swap is not very attractive to the Canadian operators. Under both of these scenarios, Lake Kookanoosa would be at elevation 2451 feet on July 31, said Ruff – is that high enough? No one at TMT knows the answer to that question, at this point, Henriksen replied. Basically, what the small group tried to do was come up with an operation that would accommodate the Fish and Wildlife Service's sturgeon request, then maximize Libby elevation, in an effort to make the Libby/Arrow swap as attractive to Canada as possible, without hammering the bull trout too hard, said Jim Litchfield.

Boyce reiterated Oregon's concern that the annual sturgeon operation essentially takes water that otherwise would be used for salmon. We're basically trying to minimize the impacts of the sturgeon operation on salmon, he said, and I don't think that's a very productive approach – the needs of all three species should be adequately provided for, rather than simply pitting one against the other. Will that issue be addressed and, hopefully, resolved in the updated Biological Opinions? Boyce asked.

Essentially the answer is yes, Brown replied; however, that resolution is going to look very much like what the TMT has done this year, in creating a technical subgroup to develop the summer operation. Third, he said, VARQ may help. If you have ideas you think would improve the situation beyond that, I'm all ears, Brown said. The only thing I would add is that the Fish and Wildlife Service is working with NMFS, to try to figure out what best to do, said Yoshinaka.

To summarize my concerns, said Boyce, this type of exercise, in which the needs of one listed species are pitted against the needs of another listed species, is extremely bothersome. What needs to happen is for NMFS and the Fish and Wildlife Service to identify and provide the flows and operations to meet the needs of all three species, without requiring tradeoffs between them.

Daley observed that this year's operation is about as restricted as you can get, from a reservoir operations standpoint – in fact, he said, there is real question, at least to Bonneville, about whether the project operators can pull it off. Do you want more restriction, he asked, or do you want more flexibility? What the BiOp says is that 20 feet of Libby storage will be made available to augment flows in the Lower Columbia, Boyce replied. However, under the operational scenarios we've heard described today, a good part of that volume is going to be used to benefit sturgeon and bull trout, not salmon. Because of the sturgeon operation, Libby will not reach full pool this year; it will end July at least 8 feet down from full, said Boyce, which means we won't get the full 20-foot draft for salmon. To answer the question of what I would do instead, said Boyce, I would prefer to see us design an operation that meets the needs of each of the species. Again, he said, we need to identify those needs, then design and implement an operation that meets those needs.

In response to a question from Yoshinaka, Jim Athearn said the planned Libby spill test was postponed because of a large number of objections from local residents and others; the Corps plans to reschedule the test either this fall or next spring, once further coordination has taken place.

To be clear, said Boyce, is it NMFS' interpretation of the BiOp that there is not a 20-foot Libby draft dedicated solely to salmon? That's correct, Brown replied – the salmon and sturgeon BiOps were done in tandem in 1995, and it is NMFS' interpretation that the 20-foot draft to elevation 2439 at Libby is to be used to benefit both salmon and sturgeon.

V. FCRPS Biological Opinion Process and Schedule.

Brown said the draft FCRPS Biological Opinion was not distributed to the states and tribes on

May 22 as planned; obviously, he said, we missed the May 22 deadline, because there are still some issues we're trying to resolve. Our current schedule is to distribute the draft for review by the other co-managers by the end of June, or possibly early July. It is still NMFS' intent to have the new Biological Opinion in place by late August or early September, said Brown. And the other co-managers, such as Idaho Power, will also have an opportunity to review the draft? Roger Fuhrman asked. Yes, Brown replied – once we distribute it to the states and tribes, we will make it generally available at the same time.

It's a little premature for me to delve too deeply into what the draft contains, said Brown; however, I do want to reassure people that they shouldn't expect to see too many surprises once it's released. The new BiOp will look at all Hs and all ESUs, so in that respect, it will go well beyond the question of whether or not to breach the Lower Snake dams. It will address the dam breaching issue, he said, as well as a variety of other measures, such as spill, flow enhancement, VARQ etc.

In what context does the new BiOp address dam breaching? Boyce asked. I can't really get into the details, Brown replied; however, I will tell you that there will be greater certainty – dam breaching will be linked to performance measures and a trigger mechanism based on the ability to meet those performance measures. In other words, he said, whether or not those performance measures are met would trigger an automatic decision, at some point, on whether, and when, to put the breaching question before Congress.

The BiOp will also address many of the concepts outlined in the All-H paper, Brown continued – how the broader package, which addresses all of the ESUs and all of the Hs will be structured to meet the recovery needs of all of the species. As I said, it will cover flow, spill, water quality measures, structural measures, and many other elements included in the package NMFS distributed in March, Brown said.

Boyce said Oregon still intends to provide comments on the draft performance measures report – is it too late for NMFS to incorporate our comments? he asked. If you have material you would like us to incorporate, I suggest that you get it to us as soon as possible, said Brown. If, after you see the actual draft, you want to rethink or reshape some of the comments you made earlier, you will also have an opportunity to do that, he added. In response to another question from Boyce, Yoshinaka said the Fish and Wildlife Service's 2000 Biological Opinion will be released at about the same time as the NMFS BiOp.

In response to another question from Michael Newsom, Brown said NMFS is also working on its draft Hells Canyon Biological Opinion; NMFS intends to share that draft BiOp with Idaho Power and FERC before it is more broadly distributed. I'm not sure how long that process will take, he said, so I can't tell you when that broader review will occur. The same is true of the PUD BiOps, with the exception of the Wells BiOp, Brown said – that document has gone through the Mid-Columbia Coordinating Committee, and we're getting ready to sign it.

In response to a question from Silverberg, Brown said the July IT agenda should include an opportunity for clarifying questions about the draft BiOp, although a substantive discussion of its contents may be a bit premature, given the sheer volume of information its recipients will have to digest and the Fourth of July holiday schedule. John Palensky suggested that an additional IT meeting may be necessary in later July, to get into the details of the new BiOp.

Boyce said that, given the intensity of review this document will command, 30 days may not be enough time. What's the driver for this somewhat limited review period? he asked. Our driver is the fact that this BiOp was supposed to be completed in 1999, said Brown – now we're well into 2000, and we want to get it signed this year. I've gone back to the well several times for extensions, Brown said, because I seriously underestimated the scale of the analyses required to integrate things like the CRI analysis, the PATH results and the All-H paper. We want to provide some additional details about what we're planning to do in all four Hs, said Brown, so that it makes sense as a package. Basically, he said, we don't want the schedule to slip any further; while I understand your desire to have adequate time for review, we have been doing our best to keep the states and tribes abreast of where we're heading with this effort. If, when all is said and done, Oregon would rather have more time for review than see the BiOp finished by September, then you should make that one of your comments, Brown said.

My point is that this BiOp is a huge piece of work, and a true milestone in the region's salmon recovery effort, said Boyce – I think it's critical that the region have adequate time to do a thoughtful, in-depth review. I believe you probably have more of the BiOp in front of you already than you may think, said Brown – for example, the CRI extinction risk analysis, which you already have for all 12 ESUs, gives you a pretty good idea of what that section of the BiOp is going to say about the status quo.

VI. State of Idaho/Nez Perce Tribe Gas Waiver Update.

Mary Lou Soscia reported that, as many IT members will remember, the IT had a number of painful conversations about the timing and magnitude of the cold-water releases from Dworshak. One of the things we said at that time was that we wanted to develop a better process for making decisions about Dworshak this year, she said; that is particularly important to EPA, because we see those Dworshak releases as the only means of controlling summer water temperatures in the Lower Snake and Columbia, given the present configuration of the system. For that reason, she said, EPA is working with NMFS, the State of Idaho, the Nez Perce Tribe, the Corps and others to figure out a more proactive way to reach agreement on Dworshak operations in 2000.

We have had a number of meetings to discuss this issue, Soscia said; in addition, EPA has run 26 separate scenarios through its water temperature model in an effort to inform the decision-makers about the expected effects of the various potential release strategies. There was a meeting yesterday in Lewiston between EPA, NMFS, the State of Idaho and the Nez Perce Tribe; the intent of the meeting

was to try to reach agreement on some sort of framework for making Dworshak operational decisions this summer. Rather than bypassing the existing decision process, she said, we would like to figure out how it might be improved, in terms of inclusivity and proactive decision-making.

At yesterday's meeting, we were able to agree on some general sideboards as to how we can move forward and work with TMT to make operational decisions this summer, Soscia continued. EPA laid out some criteria for how those Dworshak operational decisions should be made this year, she said, and I think there was general agreement that those criteria made sense:

- ! develop an operating scenario that reflects a normative hydrograph
- ! seek a biological balance between temperature benefits and flow benefits for both juvenile and adult migrants
- ! develop an operation that minimizes the number of days when water temperatures exceed 20 degrees C.

At the meeting, there was no specific agreement on a particular operation this summer, said Soscia; over the next couple of weeks, we will be working hard to reach one, in conjunction with the states, tribes, NMFS, the Corps and TMT. In general, she said, yesterday's meeting went very well, and there seems to be a real commitment to move forward in a cooperative way this year.

I would second your statement that nothing has yet been agreed to, said Ruff; we have not yet developed a firm proposal, but are looking at the various scenarios that have been modeled to see which is most likely to meet the sideboards Mary Lou laid out. We expect that this discussion will take further shape in the TMT process, he said.

In response to a question, Soscia added that the State of Idaho and the Nez Perce Tribe developed a joint response to NMFS' request for a waiver for Dworshak Dam operations this year. Some have perceived that response as being somewhat burdensome, she said; in a large part, yesterday's meeting was an attempt to figure out a way to reach a mutually-acceptable operation without having to undergo the extremely meticulous process Idaho and the Nez Perce Tribe have laid out for granting a waiver. My sense yesterday was that both the State of Idaho and the Nez Perce Tribe were very willing to try to work out an agreement that works for everyone, she said; one possibility we discussed was holding the July 6 TMT meeting in Lewiston, as a way to reach out and engage people in these discussions. In response to a question from Boyce, Soscia said that, during yesterday's meeting, both Idaho and the Nez Perce Tribe demonstrated great flexibility in their willingness to discuss the parameters they had laid out for granting a waiver in 2000.

As Mary Lou noted, said Ruff, EPA has run 26 separate modeling scenarios to look at the temperature effects of various operations at Dworshak and Brownlee this year; at yesterday's meeting, we discussed about 10 of those scenarios in detail. I would expect that Paul Wagner will provide an overview of those discussions at the next TMT meeting, in the hopes that a proposal can be developed

as to how to meet flow and temperature needs in the Snake River this summer, Ruff said.

Is your expectation that you will be bringing a specific proposal to tomorrow's TMT meeting? Henriksen asked. What we would like to discuss at tomorrow's TMT meeting is a process for how we would reach agreement, Soscia replied; however, there isn't a specific scenario that has been developed at this time. Idaho has asked that the TMT develop such a proposal, for presentation to Idaho and the Nez Perce, Wagner added. In response to another question, Ruff said that, if the alternative that is ultimately selected will require a waiver, then Idaho and the Nez Perce want to see that proposal. There are some alternatives that would not require a waiver, however, he added.

Boyce noted that this issue has received extensive discussion over the past several years; the State of Idaho and the Nez Perce want to retain 20 feet of Dworshak storage for adult flow augmentation and cooling after August 31, and it would be helpful to hear the biological rationale for their position. Basically, we're at stalemate as to the biological benefits that support the alternative operations Idaho and the Nez Perce are proposing, he said; if they can't provide a sound biological basis for their position, the discussion of those other alternatives at TMT is going to be very short.

I think we had a very positive meeting yesterday, Soscia replied; both Idaho and the Nez Perce Tribe expressed a willingness to be flexible, and I would suggest that their interest in working collaboratively with TMT is very good news. I think that makes a lot of sense, said Michael Newsom. That's true, said Yoshinaka, but the salmon managers have requested the biological basis for the Idaho/Nez Perce desire to retain Dworshak storage for use on adults in September on numerous occasions, and to date, we have received no response. It sounds as though it would be a good idea for the Nez Perce or CRITFC to attend an upcoming TMT meeting, to provide that rationale, said Silverberg.

The group devoted a few minutes of discussion to the possible biological basis for the Idaho/Nez Perce request for September flows from Dworshak, and for delaying the release of any Dworshak water until August 1; Boyce said this has been tried once before, in 1996, and had less cooling impact than releases in other years. As I'm sure the EPA modeling will show, he said, you have to start releasing the cool water from Dworshak earlier, in July, before water temperatures begin to climb sharply, in order to have the desired impact on temperatures.

This is probably the kind of technical discussion that will be happening at TMT on June 15, when CRITFC will be making a technical presentation on why they believe September flows are necessary to encourage adult migration and spawning success, Silverberg said – perhaps, in the interest of time, I could ask that this discussion be deferred until then. No disagreements were raised to Silverberg's suggestion; Brown further suggested that it would be appropriate to encourage representatives from both Idaho and the Nez Perce Tribe to attend the June 15 meeting in Portland, with the understanding that TMT will reciprocate by meeting in Lewiston on July 6.

VII. Approval of Minutes from the April 5 IT Meeting and Summer Schedule.

Palensky reiterated that the next IT meeting will be held on July 12, rather than July 5, as it would normally be scheduled; the next meeting after that is scheduled for August 2; the one after that on September 6, although there is a possibility that this meeting could be held on August 30. Palensky said an additional IT meeting, to discuss the draft Biological Opinion, may be needed some time in July or August.

The April 5 IT minutes were approved without change.

VIII. Next IT Meeting Date.

The next meeting of the Implementation Team was set for Wednesday, July 12, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at NMFS' Portland offices. Meeting notes prepared by Jeff Kuechle, BPA contractor.